
A
Funeral Oration

On the Late

Rev. Dr. *James Foster.*

[Price Six Pence.]

~~UNIVERSITY~~

ORATION

Funeral Oration

on the Death of

Rev. Dr. James T. Johnson

Rev. Dr. James T. Johnson

~~UNIVERSITY~~

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A FUNERAL ORATION

On the Late

Rev. *James Foster*, D.D.

Pronounced before a Society of GENTLEMEN,
And Published at their Request.

By *WILLIAM RIDER*, A.B.
Late Scholar of *Jesus College*, OXON.

*Quis desiderio sit pudor, aut modus
Tam chari capitis? —*

*— Cui pudor et justitiæ soror
Incorrupta fides, nudaque veritas;
Quando ullum inveniet parem?
Multis ille quidem febilis occidit."*

K
HOR.

L O N D O N :

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in *St. Paul's Church Yard*.
M.DCC.LIII.

A

DECLARATION

The undersigned, *[illegible]*,
do hereby declare that the above
is a true and correct copy of
the original as the same appears
in the records of the Court of
Common Pleas for the County of
Coke, State of New York.

[Faint, illegible text, likely a signature and date block]

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TH E Author of the following Piece begs leave to premise these two Things ; first, That it was composed before any others which have appeared, could possibly be finished ; and, secondly, That he is of a different Persuasion, with respect to his Mode of Religion, from the Person here recommended. As the former frees him from the Accusation of Plagiarism, so the latter vindicates him from the Charge of a servile Adulation. If there should be any Features, notwithstanding, wherein his Portrait

agrees with those Pieces, which are already published; the Resemblance can arise from no other Cause, but their describing the same Person; and the greater that seems to be, the greater must have been the Attention of the Delineators.

ALL the Praise that is hoped for, is to be thought grateful; though it must be confessed, no one single Encomium has passed the Pen of the Author, which the Merits of the Deceased did not extort.

A

Funeral Oration

On the Late

Rev. *James Foster*, D.D.

'*T*IS done! *FOSTER* is no more!
The Lovers of Virtue, and the
Friends of Mankind, seem to
claim the Remembrance of their Sur-
vivors as a *Debt*. And Gratitude itself
whispers to us, that it is inhuman to
bury the Memories of such in Oblivion,
at the same time that we commit their
Clay to the Grave. This is a Conduct
highly pernicious to the Interests of So-
ciety, which are upheld intirely by the

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Numbers of illustrious Examples. And, is there any more powerful Means to increase the Number of *Heroes*, than to inform the Indolent, that Fame not only attends the Lives of such Personages, but survives them for *Ages*; that they are dear to their Fellow-Creatures, not only while they feel their present Influence on Society, but long after the Members, which composed that Society; nay, even long after the very Monuments of those Members are crumbled into Dust, and,

“ Like the baseless Fabric of a Vision,

“ Have left no Wreck behind.”

If any Person could claim this Debt of us; who more justly than *he*, whose Name *adorned* the Opening of this Piece? A Piece, which arrogates no other Merit, than to be esteemed a Testimony of the Gratitude, which the Composer thinks himself obliged to pay

to the Merits of one, whom he has beheld with Surprise, heard with Admiration, and attended always with Improvement. Is it then unseasonable to entertain you with a Delineation of those amiable Qualities, which enchanted People of all Persuasions? Is it not just that every one who esteemed this *great Man* living, should publicly attest their Value by commemorating his Virtues, when he can be seen no more? But how shall I begin; nay, rather, when shall I end? I say, how shall I begin the noble *Portrait*? Or, if I begin it, how must I sink under the great, the arduous Attempt! But to fail in an Undertaking, which exceeds the Reach of the *Many*, is no Disgrace:—Disgrace, did I say!—Nay, rather a Glory, if it is any Praise to be grateful.

ALEXANDER, falsely called the *Great*, would fit to no Artist but *Apelles*: But, who must *Apelles* have chosen

chosen for his own Picture!—Who can therefore describe the illustrious Dead, but one, like himself, endued with all the Penetration of a sound Judgment; blessed with all the Charms of perfect Eloquence; enriched with such a Knowledge of the human Mind, as few can pretend to, and fewer rival!

FORGIVE me, then, ye Friends of Reason; ye Friends of the deceased *FOSTER*, forgive me; while I endeavour to display those splendid Talents which enraptured you once, but must enrapture you, alas, no more! Ye, who have heard him, who have mended while he spake, who have his Precepts engraven, as it were, with a Pen of Iron, on the Tablet of your Hearts; while I expatiate on those happy Talents, forgive me! Forgive me, ye whose Abilities resemble those of the Departed, if I snatch the envied Theme from your

I

more

more worthy Pens, grow wanton in the Praise of one, whose Abilities surpass my narrow Comprehension, and give that Portrait only a plain and ordinary *Frame*, which the Richness of your Genius would have adorned with GOLD.

WHEN *Greece* lost her *DEMOS-THENES*, and *Rome* her *CICERO*, universal was their Sorrow; general their Loss.— Though, indeed, the Enemies of both these Worthies triumphed in their Fate, and smiled at their Destruction. But, when *FOSTER* expired! say, ye Humane, was the public Grief less universal, was the Sense of their Loss less general, less apparent? Even those, who differed in Sentiments with him, seemed to deplore him; and those, who publicly opposed him, lamented his Fate, as a Damage, which the Friends of Truth could scarce sustain, and, perhaps, never recover. How great

great the Afflictions of his Disciples are, let them declare : But, alas, can they declare it !

YET let us endeavour to investigate the Means which he employed to raise so stupendous, so amiable a Fabric of Popularity ; and if it be not in our Power to give the Description all the Shades, or all the Finishing it deserves ; yet if the very *Out-lines* can afford Pleasure, judge ye how must the *Touches* of a more masterly Hand have affected us !

NATURE, who designed him for the grand Work in which he laboured and excelled, furnished him with all the Qualifications which were necessary to render her Design perfect ; and he being well apprized of her Intention, improved her Favours to the utmost.

HIS

HIS * *Voice* was naturally sweet, strong, distinct, harmonious; capable of being raised to the highest Pitch without offending the Ear, or dropped to the lowest Notes without becoming inarticulate. But the *Manner* in which he managed this remarkable Talent is scarce conceivable;—how then can it be described! When did he vary it without Cause? When did he alter it without Propriety? When did he change it without Effect?—There is nothing that sooner fatiates an Audience than *Monotony* [a Sameness of Sound]; but was he ever guilty of this Fault? Was not his *Voice* always adapted to his Matter, always varied as his Method changed? Was it not as expressive of the Sense it was to convey, as the most judicious *Recitative*?

* Ac Vocis quidem bonitas optanda est: non est enim in nobis: sed tractatio, atque usus in nobis. Ergo ille princeps variabit & mutabit; omnes sonorum tum intendens, tum remittens, persequetur gradus. Cic. *Orat.* § 18.

And

And was it not as powerful to work on the Minds of the Auditors, as those of the most *celebrated Actors*? But though it was thus *managed*, it was always *free*; and, when most under the Guidance of Art, appeared most *natural*. When his Subject was argumentative, it was clear, nervous, distinct; its Cadence was short, and its Tone unvaried. When some noble Sentence of great Importance was to be inculcated, it was then grave, solemn, majestic! When some exalted Rapture was to be conveyed, how did it rise, pierce the Ear by its Rapidity, and dart like Lightning on the Soul! If Grief was the Subject, how sweetly was it modulated, how soft were its Variations, how flow its Accents, how interrupted, ah! how interrupted its Periods! But, to sum up its Excellencies at once: His VOICE was always an ECHO to his Sentiments.

If he was a perfect Master in this Particular, he was no less so in another Quality *essential* to a good ORATOR, * Action. Action! the Soul of Eloquence. Action! the universal Tongue, by which we are enabled to convey the Sentiments of our Minds to those who are Strangers to our Language, and by which the ordinary Wit may triumph over an Audience, more than the most consummate Genius without it.

FOSTER was well acquainted with the Power of this *external Eloquence*; and no Man seems to have made use of it with more Propriety, or to have exercised it with more Success. 'Tis to this Talent we may ascribe a Circumstance, which, without its Assistance,

* Actio, inquam, in dicendo una dominatur; sine hac summus orator, esse in numero nullo potest: mediocris, hac instructus, summos sæpe superare.

De Orat. Lib. III. 56.

would

would be unaccountable: I mean that *LONG ATTENTION* which the *Pair* *Sex* paid to his Dictates. A *Sex* whose Characteristic it is to be volatile; variable; pleased with nothing long; fond of Trifles; Enemies to Thought; greater Enemies to intense Thought; but more so when grave, abstracted, exalted Ideas are the Objects. Yet how numerous, how splendid a Shew of these attended his Lectures, who seemed so far elevated by his Precepts, as to rival the angelic Existences as much in their *mental* Applications, as they are supposed to do in their *external* Forms? With what a sacred Thirst did they imbibe the Rivers of his Doctrine; with what heavenly Hunger did they devour his angelic Food! And how could it well be otherwise, when the *great* *PREACHER* spake not only to their Ears, but their Eyes likewise, and was Master of all the Avenues by which Knowledge and Instruction

struction can be conveyed to the human Mind?—But to be more particular.

—* His *Action* was grave, expressive, natural, free from Violence, free from Distortions, free from *Blame*; such as became the *Pulpit*; and, though remote from that of the *Theatre*, not any ways inferior to it for its Success.—Methinks I see him now, in the Attitude of *PAUL* at *Athens*, arresting the Attention of his Auditors, bidding their scattered Thoughts be collected, suspending their Passions, and infusing an irresistible Awe into their Minds.—Such was his Attitude when he addressed the *Deity* in Prayer.—Methinks I see him now unravelling all the Meanders of the human Heart, and,

* Omnes motus subsequi debet gestus, non hic verba exprimens *Scenicus*, sed universam rem & sententia non demonstratione, sed significatione declarans, laterum inflexione hac forti, ac virili, non ab *Scena* & *histrionibus*, sed ab armis, aut etiam a palæstra. *De Orat.* III. § 59.

with an animated Gesture, pouring his Dictates into the inmost Recesses of the Soul! Methinks I now see him expanding his Hands, stooping over his *Rostrum*, and stealing into the Bosom of all who hear, of all who see, him! Oh, could we but *see* him once more!—Why should I mention his Eyes, his Looks, those faithful * *Indexes* of his Mind, which inforced all that his Gesture or his Voice could inculcate! Excuse me here: No Description can be adequate to the divine Original.

BUT what are these Excellencies, these envied Excellencies, when compared to his nobler Qualities? How poor will his *external* Charms appear, when set in contrast with those of his Mind! and though, abstracted from all *other* Advantages, they might have made another

* In ore sunt omnia—

Animi est enim omnis actio, & imago animi, vultus est, indices oculi. *De Orat. ut supra.*

Man

Man *popular*; yet they ought to be considered only as the *Ground* of the Portrait of this *great Man*.

HIS *Diction* was always consonant to his Subjects; in the argumentative Part, divested of all these Ornaments which could lead the Mind aside, or cast a *false Bias* on its Faculties; though concise, it was always perspicuous; though studied, yet easy; though simple, yet elegant; free from any forced Metaphors, void of foreign Expressions, nervous, flowing, persuasive; and, in one Word, BRITISH *.

HIS *Method* was always natural, always improving, always *admirable*! His DIVISIONS were few, but always sufficient, rising out of one another, and in-

* Sermo purus erit, & LATINUS.

CIC. Orat. § 24

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creasing in Strength to the very last Period of his Discourse.

BUT for his *Matter* ! how noble, how !
—what shall I call it !—Here it was that he shewed himself the Scholar, without Pedantry ; the Philosopher, without Dogmatism ; the Unbiased, without Scepticism ; the Reasoner, without Infidelity ; and the CHRISTIAN, without Bigotry. As he was always averse to the Sentiments of those who think, that, in order to be *religious*, we are to suspend, to discard the Use of our most exalted Faculty, *Reason* ; so he was equally remote from those who think that *every* Man's personal Reason, or the collective Reason of all Mankind, is commensurate to all Truth ; well knowing that the immediate Consequences of *both* Opinions would tend to the Subversion of all religious Adoration, and terminate in an Evil, which is too horrible to mention.—Yet

there are some, who think it no small *Finishing* in his *Portrait*, to brand him with the latter *Defect*; a Defect from which I thought it my Duty to exculpate him. And for the Truth of what I assert, I appeal to his Discourse on this Subject: *Pride was not made for Man*: I appeal to his Piece on those Words of St. JOHN, *I am the Light of the World*: I appeal to his Illustration of the *Parable of the Man who found a Pearl of great Price in the Field*; for the Scope and Tendency of which Discourses I am obliged to the Strength of my Memory, having never heard him without retaining his Arguments. And who could possibly forget Precepts that were delivered in the Manner in which he pronounced his? Permit me then to produce, in Confirmation of what I have asserted, one Sentence out of his Discourse on the Parable of the Distribution of Talents: “ It is, says he, an Objec-

“ tion of Infidels against the Divine

“ Oeconomy in the moral Government
 “ of the World, that *moral Evil* is per-
 “ petually *increasing* ; but this, at first,
 “ seeming partial Distribution of the
 “ Talents at the great Audit, wherein
 “ he who had received the greatest
 “ Number is rewarded with that of the
 “ unprofitable Servant, is a sufficient
 “ Overthrow of their Principles ; a Dis-
 “ covery which no one but the great Re-
 “ deemer of Mankind could have ar-
 “ rived at, and never could have been
 “ investigated by the most exalted Ex-
 “ ertions of *human Reason* ; though, af-
 “ ter this Discovery, we find that is a
 “ Principle which illustrates the divine
 “ Oeconomy, and sets the Attributes of
 “ DEITY in a Point of Light, wherein
 “ they appear infinitely *amiable*.”

THOUGH, indeed, all the most inte-
 resting, exalted, important Subjects em-
 ployed his Thoughts ; yet *Benevolence*,
 yet *Philanthropy* was his most favourite

Theme : A Benevolence which took into its Bosom the whole human Race ; cast down all nominal Distinctions, rejected all civil, religious, partial Limitations, and tended to make us, like the great Father and Creator of the human Race, good without Bounds, and kind without Restraint. No one exposed the unsocial, the partial, narrow, and unbenevolent Affections more frequently, or with more Sincerity, than he ; no one more ardently inculcated the *social* Virtues ; no Man was a greater Patron for that Quality which revealed Writ makes the *Characteristic*, the *Criterion* of a CHRISTIAN. Do ye not hear him repeat one animated Sentence, from his Exposition of the Parable of Dives and Lazarus ? IN THE NEXT WORLD, THE UNSOCIAL, AND UNBENEVOLENT WILL BE THE FOOTSTOOLS OF THOSE WHO WERE HUMANE AND SOCIAL IN THIS. A Sentence that ought to be written in Letters of Gold, and en-

graven in indelible Characters on every Heart !

Do we not recollect him in his Excursion into the intellectual World, furnishing that the Employ of the angelic Orders and departed Saints might consist in Acts of Benevolence, in affording Succour to the Distressed, Help to the Needy, and Assistance to the Devout in this lower Sphere. “ Nay, says he, some
 “ Measure of their Happiness may con-
 “ sist in the Exercise of this Virtue, may
 “ proceed from this Intercourse, the Con-
 “ sciousness of which affords the Mind
 “ a Gratification as exalted, as laudable.”

But were I to produce the thousandth Part of what I remember to have heard from him, on this amiable, this noble, this god-like Topic, it would engross more of your Patience than I can arrogate ; and might, perhaps, be deemed rather an ostentatious Display of the Strength of my own Faculties, than a
 Debt

debt extorted by the Merits of one, who demands more than I can say.

THE *Roman*, in his Description of an Orator *, “ insists upon his being skilled in all Branches of Literature, instructed in all the Arts, and Master of every Science.” Did not *FOSTER* answer this Description? Did he not shew himself, at once, the Critic, the Historian, the Philosopher, the Civilian, the Theologist, and the Orator? And, in each of these Characters, did he not appear equal with the most Celebrated, and superior to many, who had spent their Lives in a happy Cultivation of any of the separate Branches?

† *QUINTILIAN*, in his *Institutions*, lays it down as a *fundamental*

* Sic sentio, neminem esse in oratorum numero habendum, qui non sit omnibus iis artibus, quæ sunt libero dignæ perpolitus. *Cic. de Orat. Lib. I. 16.*

† Nemo perfectus orator nisi vir bonus,

Quintil. Inst.
Maxim,

Maxim, that “ no one but a good Man
 “ can be a perfect Orator.” How did
 FOSTER answer the Definition of
 this *consummate Critic* ! How did his
 domestic Character *illustrate* his public !
 How was his Life a *Comment* on his
 Doctrine ! This is a Topic that opens
 to us a wide and amiable Field, will af-
 ford such a Variety of Wonders, will
 set his Character in such an engaging
 Light, that I find myself under no small
 Concern, when obliged to pass it over
 in Silence. But other Pens will do him
 this Justice ; a Justice, which he claims
 as a Tribute of the most famous Bio-
 graphers, who, while they discharge this
 Debt to him, will reward themselves
 with Immortality. To such I leave this
 Part of his Character ; and such have
 not only assumed, but likewise shone in
 it. My Design was only to consider
 him in the Quality of an ORATOR :
 Let them paint him as the Citizen, the
 Domestic, the Companion, the Friend,
 the

the *Man*, the *CHRISTIAN* ! Let them draw aside the Curtain of his Conduct, and expose to View the many other lovely Virtues, that characterized him, from his Cradle to his Grave ! Let them describe those Charms which graced his familiar Discourse, and stole away the Hearts of all whom he conversed with ! Let them paint that Constellation of Virtues, which purified his Breast, and made his Life not less exemplary than his Eloquence ! It is not my Design to incroach on their Province ; and, for that Reason, I pass over in Silence his remarkable *Affability* ; I omit his unbounded *Generosity*, his engaging *Gravity*, his prudent *Complaisance*, his inviolable *Integrity*, his inexhaustible *Humanity* ; nay, I pass by a great many good Qualities, each of which would charm us separately ; but when considered united,—how must they *astonish* !

How

How great then is the *Loss* which the Public sustains in his Death! how irreparable! how insupportable! how inexpressible! Wherever his Fame extended, his Loss is *felt*; and wherever the Sons of Knowledge reside, his Fame was extended. At the greatest Distances I have heard him spoken of, with as much Esteem as in the very Bowels of this *Metropolis*; and, in every Notice that was taken of him, mentioned as something great, extraordinary, *wonderful*! The Learned corresponded with him, with Pleasure, Pride, Improvement; and all Persuasions wished that he was their own. It was this that engaged the *greatest Poet* that this Age produced, to compliment him in a Piece that was intended to brand the Undeserving with *Infamy*. Let FOSTER, says he,

“ Let modest FOSTER, if he will,

“ excel,

“ Ten Metropolitans, in preaching well.”

A

A Compliment, which at once heightens
our Idea of the *Poet's* Impartiality, and
aggrandizes that which we have of the
Genius of *FOSTER*.

HERE, then, ye Sons of Knowledge,
drop one Tear, and increase the public
Flood ! Ye Benevolent, honour his Me-
mory with a Stream of Sorrow ; and pay,
oh ! pay him that *Stipend* of Sighs, with
which he would have honoured your
Remains ! Ye Friends of the Deceased,
who heard him with *Pleasure*, saw him
with *Admiration*, and attended his Lec-
tures with Profit, need ye any Persuasion
to lament your Instructor, your Guide,
your Exemplar, your Friend, your *FOS-
TER* ! Oh, *FOSTER*, thou Delight
of the Virtuouse ! *FOSTER*, thou Or-
nament of the Learned World ! *FOS-
TER*, thou Admiration of the Critic !
FOSTER, thou Envy of the Eloquent !
FOSTER, thou Example of the Pious !

F O S -

[30]

FOSTER! thou!— What shall
call thee? Oh, *FOSTER! FOSTER!*
how can I say,— *THOU ART NO*
MORE!

F I N I S

The PUBLIC are desired to take
NOTICE,

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VOLTAIRE's *Advice to a Journalist*.

